

better able to appreciate it than some of his brethren, preferred the close and nervous reasoning of the apostle of the Gentiles; or in the other, who, inferior in intellectual attainment might be more charmed with harmonious cadences and graceful gestures: and it was quite natural in a Jew, who retained his veneration for the ritual of his fathers, to hold in higher esteem the apostle of the circumcision; and we cannot but regard it as an amiable trait in the character of one who had enjoyed the personal teaching of Him who spake as never man spake, that he highly estimated this singular felicity, and in a peculiar sense called Christ, master. The error consisted not in the indulgence of these preferences, but in certain affections of mind, and sectarian practices which were permitted to grow out of them.

For it is manifest that the undue indulgence of these predilections for particular teachers, led to the introduction into the Corinthian church of a practice that prevailed among the philosophical sects of Greece—that of assuming the name of the teachers whom they respectively followed. It was customary to designate the different schools of philosophy by the names of their founders; hence we have the Epicureans, Pyrrhonists, Platonists, and hence the people of Antioch, following this custom first called the disciples of Christ, CHRISTIANS. In this there was no impropriety for the name designated the class and the creed. But all the Christian teachers taught the same gospel of which Christ was the author, and they were nothing more than the instruments of its diffusion—and consequently for their followers to assume their name, was something more blamable than to introduce an unnecessary and improper distinction—it was to rob Christ of the glory due unto His Name.

Partiality for the human instruments, led the partizans of each to forget the Divine teacher, and hence the peculiar pungency of the apostles' ironical questions—"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

But another evil grew out of their improper party distinctions—a spirit of intolerance. Diversity of opinion as to the merits of their respective teachers, produced mutual disaffection and hostility. Names, which at first meant no more than the harmless preference of the individual, became at length the incentive of controversy and the watch word of party. Debates on trivial questions conducted by the unskillful, some times it may be in harsh and acrimonious language, and seldom with any scrupulous fairness of argument, never fail to awaken bad passions—the mother and nurse of intolerance. Hence arise divisions: and divisions in any community are more easily made than healed. One should think it would have been very easy for one member of the Corinthian church to admire the wisdom of Paul without being alienated from another who praised the eloquence of Apollos; but this, the judgment of a spectator at a distance, is not always the sentiment of a man tossed on the waves of party, dizzy with the agitation, and rendered insensible to every motive of forbearance and charity. What a lamentable record of these evils does the history of the church present! How mournfully do they sometimes fall under our own observation!

Let it not be overlooked, however, that the authorized teachers were in no degree to blame for those divisions which had arisen in the primitive church. There was no ambiguity in their doctrine, no discrepancy in their discipline. Guided by the same spirit, Paul and